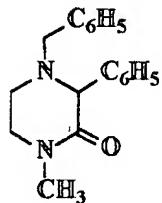


CLAIMS

We claim:

1. (original): A process for preparing a compound represented by Formula II



Formula II

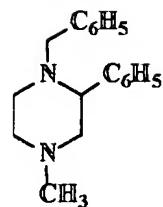
comprising methylating 4-benzyl-2-oxo-3-phenylpiperazine, of Formula VI.



Formula VI

2. (original): The process of claim 1 where the said methylating step is conducted with methyl iodide in *N,N*-dimethylformamide in the presence of sodium hydride.

3. (original): A process for preparing compound represented by Formula VII

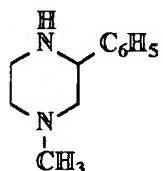


Formula VII

comprising reducing the methylated compound of Formula II.

4. (original): The process of claim 3 where the said reducing step is conducted with lithium aluminum hydride.

5. (original): A process for preparing 1-Methyl-3-phenylpiperazine represented by Formula I

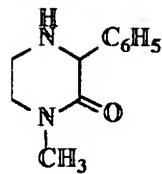


Formula I

comprising hydrogenating compound of Formula VII as obtained in claim 3.

6. (original): The process of claim 5 where the said hydrogenation step is conducted in acetic acid in the presence of palladium-carbon catalyst.

7. (original): A process for preparing a compound represented by Formula VIII

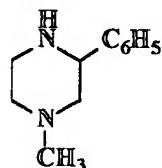


Formula VIII

comprising hydrogenating the compound of Formula II.

8. (currently amended) The process of ~~claim 8 of claim 7~~ where the hydrogenating step is done in acetic acid in the presence of palladium-carbon catalyst.

9. (original): A process for preparing 1-Methyl-3-phenylpiperazine represented by Formula I



Formula I

comprising reducing the compound of Formula VIII .

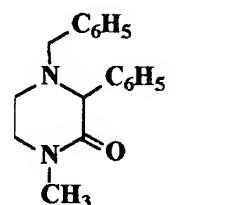
10. (currently amended): The process of ~~claim 10 of claim 9~~ where the said reducing step is conducted with lithium aluminum hydride.

11. (original): A process for preparing 1-Methyl-3-phenylpiperazine of Formula I comprising the steps of reducing a compound of Formula II,

hydrogenating a compound of Formula VII.

12. (original): A process for preparing 1-Methyl-3-phenylpiperazine of Formula I comprising the steps of
hydrogenating a compound of Formula II,
reducing a compound of Formula VIII,

13. (original): A piperazine derivative compound represented by Formula II below



Formula II